THE

HAPPINESS

OF

DEAD CLERGYMEN,

Provided they die in the Lord.

A

FUNERAL SERMON.

Preached in the L—gh K—k of Gl—g—w, on the Death of the C—m—tee which ſat there.

By the R—v—d D—— T——

GLASGOW:

TYPIS ACADEMICIS.

M DCC LXIX.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

AMONG other accuſations, for which there is not more ground than there ought to be, it hath, and eſpecially of late, been charged upon the orthodox, that they diſcover an extravagant fondneſs to appear in print. As a proof of this charge, is alledged the eagerneſs which the clergymen of this denomination ſhew to publiſh their ſynodical ſermons. From this accuſation I can take it upon me to free the author of the following diſcourſe. I ſolemnly aſſure the public, that it is printed neither in conſequence of his own inclination, nor at the requeſt of his freinds. On the contrary, I knew him to be a man of ſuch modeſty, that, had his opinion been aſked in the affair, he never would have given his conſent to the publication. For this reaſon, I confeſs, I did not ask it. For the ſame reaſon, I have printed the author's name in blanks, that ſo, if he pleaſes, he may deny it; and it is my opinion, that, notwithſtanding the numerous audience, who, to their great ſatisfaction, were preſent at the delivering, his diffidence is ſo great, that he will deny it. I am even ſenſible, that he will be exceedingly angry when he ſees it; and would chide the editor, if he knew him, pretty ſeverely on that account. But it behoved, after all,

to be an anger of kindneſs ; for the diſcourſe, in my opinion, does the reverend author no ſmall honour. It is, indeed, one of the beſt, in every reſpect, which I remember ever to have heard him deliver.

What induced me, however, to ſend it to the preſs, was not, I confeſs, ſo much my regard to the author, though it is high, as my concern for the public. This is a ſentiment which every good patriot ought ſometimes to indulge. I was deſirous that people might be diſabuſed in ſome points ; and I thought the diſcourſe itſelf might be uſeful. For my own part, with regard to the religious parties that agitate this kingdom, I am pretty much neutral ; or, if I have a bias at all, I am rather inclined to orthodoxy than otherwiſe. I cannot at leaſt avoid obſerving, that juſtice is not done them upon every occaſion. For inſtance, the other party would fain have it believed, that all the philoſophers and men of deep reflection are upon their ſide of the queſtion, and that the cauſe of their opponents is chiefly ſupported by a number of old wives and elders. The following ſermon, will, I hope, be regarded as a proof of the contrary ; and this, I own, was one leading reaſon which induced me to make it public. It will be now evident, that the orthodox have their philoſophers alſo ; and that their adverſaries have not the advantage over them, even in point of human argument, ſo much as is generally believed. It will alſo appear, that this party has likewiſe its learned men, as is plain from the great

great number of books which our author expreſsly condeſcends upon as having read; and we have even reaſon to think, from what he hints in the ſame place, that his whole reading is not confined to that catalogue *. Such authorities as our author give credit to the cauſe; and it is highly reaſonable that it ſhould be known to have ſuch authorities on its ſide. It is right that poſterity ſhould know, that there exiſted, in the year 1769, a man of the orthodox perſuaſion, who could repeat three odes of Horace. Such anecdotes will enable them to judge more impartially between the parties.

Another reaſon which induced me to publiſh the following diſcourſe is, that I thought it might be a model of good compoſition. There is a ſimplicity, I ought rather to call it an *ingeniouſneſs*, in the language, which is remarkable. Every thing is called by its plaineſt name. No ſentiment, even though it ſeem to bear againſt his own party, is clothed in ſuch terms as to make you miſtake it. This ſincerity will do more good to the cauſe than all the palliations of rhetoric. It has, beſides, this effect with reſpect to the audience, that, as it is upon the level of their underſtandings, it brings the matters treated of home to them, and makes them comprehend them more minutely. Here is no elevation of language, no viſible poliſh of period, no affected energy. A cool, ſedate majeſty ſits on the

* He mentions the having *enlarged* his ſphere of reading.

whole. Good thoughts expreſſed in a *home-ly* ſtyle, is the characteriſtic of all this gentleman's diſcourſes, and of this more particularly. In ſhort, I regard it as an excellent ſpecimen of pulpit-eloquence, and would fain hope it may contribute to put a ſtop to that Rouſſovian torrent of language which is beginning to deluge our churches, and which often carries away both ſpeaker and hearers beyond the preciſe point originally propoſed. I remarked the ſame ingeniouſneſs in the ſentiment. He lays down his principles, and after convincing *himſelf* of their juſtneſs, he ſuffers them to lead him where they pleaſe. This too is a preſumption in favour of his cauſe, as it diſcovers the *confidence* of its advocates. The only fault our author ſeems chargeable with is, the endeavouring to dazzle you with uncommon arguments, and to turn a ſentiment, which at firſt view ſeems to lie againſt him, into a topic for him. But he is to be excuſed in this, as it is the humour of the age, and as it is impoſſible for any writer at preſent altogether to reſiſt it. Beſides, he makes his own apology in this particular, by candidly owning that he has been ſometimes charged with *refining*. Every man has his own *manner*; and, if he were to lay aſide that, he would not be *himſelf*.

With the ſame view, I cannot avoid remarking the cloſe and minute argumentation which runs through the whole diſcourſe. Every thing is proved—that can be proved. Even points which you would think might well have been taken

taken for granted, and which any other would have contented himſelf with naming, yet he thinks it improper to paſs over in this curſory manner, and carefully aſcertains them all by a very particular probation. For inſtance: You would think it ſuperfluous to prove that the members of the C—m—tee are dead; you would think that fact was ſelf-evident to every body; and that the preaching of their funeral oration itſelf ſuppoſed it. Yet, as nothing is of more conſequence in any undertaking than to *ſet out ſurely*, he is very particular here, and thinks it neceſſary to eſtabliſh this point well, and previous to all others. How different is this from that ſuperficial method, but too general in our times, which, if it can prove but *one* point in *one* diſcourſe, thinks itſelf acquitted, by what is called *rules of compoſition*, from all farther obligation? All here is the reverſe of this. Our author attends to every thing. Not a point comes in his way but goes away loaded with evidence. Nothing is overlooked, nothing handled ſuperficially, nothing truſted to the underſtanding of his audience. He, firſt of all, as hath been obſerved, lays a ſolid *foundation*; he proves his principles; he proceeds upon this proof; he advances cautiouſly, and carries light and demonſtration along with him in every ſtep. In ſhort, this diſcourſe is ſomething very different, as the reader will perceive, from the general run of ſermons in theſe days. Like every thing elſe he writes, it is, really and properly ſpeaking, "A

"philoſophical

" piloſophical eſſay adapted to common capaci-
" ties."

It will be unneceſſary to take notice of the ſubjects he ſtarts occaſionally in the courſe of his reaſoning, and which he has not had time to diſcuſs. They ſhew a comprehenſive, thinking mind. It is pity that theſe curious treatiſes which he keeps by him, and on which he has beſtowed ſo much labour, were not already made public. I would take this opportunity to entreat the reverend author to defraud us of them no longer. I beſeech you, Sir, ſuffer yourſelf to be prevailed upon by the ſolicitations of your friends to let theſe valuable tracts at laſt ſee the light. They are ſurely, by this time, wrought up to a ſufficient degree of perfection. I would beg leave to remind you of what you know, That too much poliſhing is hurtful. It enervates the ſpirit, diminiſhes the ſtrength, and files away the nerves of a diſcourſe. It were much better they ſhould come out like the preſent one, warm from the brain, and clothed with their natural ornaments. Or if any imperfection ſtill adheres to them, you will have abundant leiſure to give them the laſt touches, before the ſecond edition be called for. Yet I beg you will be ſparing in this particular. There is nothing, in my opinion, which an author like *you* ought to dread ſo much as *correction*. For my part, on this very account—I mean leſt they ſhould come abroad too highly finiſhed—I ſhall not be eaſy until we have them among our hands; and I do promiſe the public, if I can but get them

them into *my* cuſtody, they ſhall not be chargeable with this defect.

To return to the preſent performance, which is now happily beyond all danger from this quarter.—I will detain the reader no longer from his inſtruction. Yet I cannot help mentioning my ſincere and final opinion of the diſcourſe he is about to peruſe, and, I declare, without having the ſmalleſt intention to prepoſſeſs him in favour of the party it eſpouſes. Upon the whole, then, it appears to me, that this is one of the beſt defences of orthdoxy which I have yet met with; and I have read moſt of the tracts which have been written on that ſide of the queſtion.

15
68
JUL

A

FUNERAL SERMON.

Bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord.*

MY FRIENDS!

AS I am the perſon pitched upon to officiate on the preſent melancholy occaſion,—though a better might, no doubt, have

 been

* The editor, like many others who may be orthodox Chriſtians notwithſtanding, acknowledges that, when at church, he was ſo engaged with the ſermon, that he forgot the text. The words he afterwards made ſhift to recollect, at leaſt he thinks ſo; but the part of ſcripture from which they are taken he has not yet, by his utmoſt ſearch, been able to find. He begs that the learned author would take the trouble to point out the paſſage where they are to be found, and ſo ſave him the trouble of reading the Bible, which he is determined to do from beginning to end, rather than be baffled by it. He cannot help obſerving, that, if he be forced to this extremity, it will be the means of withdrawing him from a courſe of reading abſolutely neceſſary, (as he hath been aſſured), for all orthodox believers, and which he has but juſt entered upon; he means, the reading ſyſtems of divinity. Nor can he promiſe, if he be withdrawn from them in *this manner*, that he will be able to prevail with himſelf to return to them again.

BRITISH MUSEUM 15 JUL 88

been found if you had ſo chuſed‡,—I ſhall endeavour, with the aſſiſtance of Divine grace, to go through this work with ſuitable decency, and to be as diſtinct as poſſible. One thing I beg of you all,—I do it at the beginning, and am in hopes that I ſhall not need to repeat it *,—and that is, that you will ſit, during the whole time of this ſervice, with great compoſure; and when I, according to the rules laid down for a diſcourſe of this nature, arrive at the *pathos*,—whether it ſhould chance to fall in the introduction, the body of the diſcourſe, or the peroration,—I ſay, when I arrive, as I muſt do, at the *pathos*, that you would not ſuffer yourſelves to be ſo much affected with any thing I ſhall then ſay as to interrupt the work with your groans and lamentations †. No, my friends! keep your ſorrow to yourſelves this day. It can do no good, and, I am much afraid, would embarraſs *me*. Beſides, the profane might mock. Let us ſhew them, on this occaſion, that our grief is too great for expreſſion. At the ſame time, a decent concern may ſit on your faces. This is allowable, and extremely ſeemly on an occaſion of this kind. Indeed, when you hear the following diſcourſe, you will not, I am afraid, be able to reſiſt *that*. O that I may be enabled to perform

‡ This introduction is equally ſenſible, ſimple, and modeſt. It is alſo ſolemn and well ſuited to the occaſion.

* It will be ſeen accordingly that he has no need to repeat it.

† This caution was very neceſſary. The propriety of giving it at the beginning of the diſcourſe is alſo extremely apparent.

form my duty this day in a manner worthy of the cauſe in which we are embarked, worthy of the memory of the deceaſed, worthy of you, my honoured audience! worthy of myſelf! worthy, in fine, of the ſad and ſolemn occaſion of our preſent aſſembling together! Strengthen me, O God *!

My buſineſs in diſcourſing from this paſſage of ſcripture, on this occaſion, ſhall be—to deſcribe the happineſs of dead clergymen, who die in the Lord. But, previous to this, and in order to render it applicable to the deſign of our preſent meeting, it will be neceſſary to handle the following points†.

I. It will be neceſſary to prove that our departed brethren of the C—m—tee actually died in the Lord.

II. I ſhall ſhew, that, if they had died in any other manner than that in which they did die, they would have died *out* of the Lord.

III. I ſhall then deſcribe their happineſs, proceeding upon the foregoing ſuppoſitions.

IV. I ſhall narrate our loſs, and the loſs whichthe Church of Sc——nd has ſuſtained by their death.

V. I ſhall conclude this diſcourſe with a ſhort encomium on each.

* This is entirely in our author's manner. He makes great uſe of that figure of ſpeech called the *apoſtrophe*. His introducing it here is very ſublime.

† Now follows the method.

This is the method ‡.

I. Then, I am to ſhew that our departed brethren of the C—m—tee actually died in the Lord.

But to clear the way to this, and that our concluſions may be built upon a ſure foundation, it will, firſt of all, be neceſſary to prove *—"that they are really dead." This I demonſtrate—

1ſt, From circumſtances. While alive they uſed to meet regularly in this kirk. They were heard to conſtitute by prayer, to propound, to debate, to vote, to direct their diſcourſe to the moderator, and to act and ſpeak, in all reſpects, like other church courts. Theſe meetings were not held in a corner. The moderator, when he entered the kirk, was not in uſe to turn the key behind him, and oblige people to look in at the windows. In that caſe they could have been ſeen but through a glaſs, and we would have had no certain evidence that they had ever exiſted. To obviate this, multitudes were actually admitted. It was made no ſecret. There are numbers of my hearers, this day, who can teſtify, if called upon, that a C—m—tee of M—ſt—rs actually ſat in this kirk,

‡ An admirable method!

* Some would have paſſed this over. But, on a near inſpection, I believe it will appear that our author hath reaſon, and that it was as neceſſary to demonſtrate this point as any of the others. Beſides, as it lies at the foundation, a flaw here was carefully to be avoided.

kirk, and did, or endeavoured to do, buſineſs. They can alſo teſtify, if it ſhall be thought neceſſary, that they met, not as companions to drink a glaſs and to have a chat, but as a court conſtituted in the name of the Lord; that one of them was called *moderator*, another *clerk*, a third *belman*, and the reſt *brethren*. Now this being the caſe, I ask what is become of this C—m—tee now? Do they exiſt or not? Are they ſeen entering this church, or ſitting in it, or haranguing in it as formerly? Is the moderator called upon, perhaps, from five different quarters at once—which is an indiſputable mark of the exiſtence of the church court —as uſual? Has the clerk for ſome time been obſerved taking down the minutes, and venturing his own humble opinion between the periods? Or has the belman gone to the door, as was his cuſtom every day while the C—m—tee ſat, and ſummoned the witneſſes from Ir—ne? If no ſingle mark of the being of a court can be adduced, what are we to conclude, but that the C—m—tee, which ſat in this place, is actually dead, as we are endeavouring to demonſtrate?

As an objection to this concluſion, and no ſlight one it muſt be confeſſed, it may be alledged by ſome that it never exiſted. In ſupport of this allegation, it may be ſtill farther alledged, that a church-court, eſpecially if conſtituted for extraordinary buſineſs as this was, generally leaves ſome marks behind it, ſome monuments of its own tranſactions, by which

by which its exiſtence may be aſcertained, even at the diſtance of a full month afterwards. Now it may be demanded, what marks, what monuments this C—m—tee has left us, what buſineſs it has done, or what one point it has determined? It may be alledged, that no traces of its being are, in fact, to be ſeen; and that, from any of its tranſactions which remain to us, nobody could venture to ſay that ſuch a court had ever exiſted. It muſt be owned, my friends! that this objection, were it well founded, is extremely formidable, and ſtrikes at the very root of our concluſions, and even at the very deſign of our meeting here this day. For, if the C—m—tee never exiſted, it could never die; and if it could not die, it could not die in the Lord; and ſo the whole affair is diſpatched in the ſhorteſt way you can imagine. In this caſe, there is no occaſion for a funeral oration; and our aſſembling together in this manner is extremely unaccountable †. That we may not, therefore, return as we came, and that the propriety of our congregating together upon this occaſion may be evident to you all, I ſhall beg leave to obviate this objection before we proceed farther. In the *firſt* place, then, it may be anſwered, that if the exiſtence of a ch——h court is to be collected only from the buſineſs it tranſacts, and the points it ſettles,

† Obſerve our author's candour. He puſhes his opponent's objection as far as it will go; and then anſwers it in the fulleſt manner.

ſettles, it would generally be a very puzzling matter for *any* ſuch court, in *any* caſe, to demonſtrate its own entity. If the matter of fact were reſted ſolely on this proof, we could have no aſſurance of the exiſtence of one ch——h court in three hundred. The truth is, it has happened to this C—m—tee, with regard to the point of buſineſs, as it has happened to moſt eccleſiaſtical judicatories in the world during theſe four thouſand years backward. It is an uncontrovertible fact, that, after all the diligence which could be uſed, and all the buſtle that was made in them, there were generally as many points to be ſettled *after* their meeting as *before*, and that ſubſequent courts never found the buſineſs before them diminiſhed by any thing their predeceſſors had done. It is unjuſt, therefore, and contrary to all rules of reaſoning, to conclude, that the C—m—tee never exiſted, becauſe we have no evidence of any buſineſs it did. 2*dly*, It is anſwered, that it actually has left us ſome monuments of the kind demanded. It will appear from the clerk's minutes,—for he was taken off with the reſt ſo ſuddenly, that he had not time to commit them to the flames, as he intended, and which, I believe, might have been better,—I ſay, it will appear from theſe, that this C—m—tee, during the time of its ſitting, received ſeveral letters, and actually examined one witneſs. It will appear, beyond all poſſibility of contradiction, that they received one letter from the pannel, one from the pr—ſb—ry

of

of Ed—n—gh, and one from J—s Wr—ht. It will appear alſo from the ſame minutes, that the R—v—d Mr J—n Ad—m, one of the witneſſes who had been ſummoned, having happened one day to come to town upon *other buſineſs*, was kidnapped ſome how into the court, and then and there, in preſence of many witneſſes, was obliged to produce the pannel's original letter, which he had put into his pocket that morning *accidentally*, or to comfort himſelf with along the road;—not dreaming, or in the leaſt foreſeeing what was to happen;—and before they would part with him, was obliged to depone, among other things, that it was againſt his inclination to give his oath in ſuch a cauſe. 3*dly*, We will turn the argument upon them. For whereas they aſſert that the C—m—tee could not die, becauſe it never exiſted; we will prove, that it did exiſt, becauſe it actually died. It could not die unleſs it had been once alive,—this is a plain point.—Now we will prove that it *did* die. This fact we have endeavoured, in ſome meaſure, to aſcertain already; and it will appear ſtill more evident, from conſidering—

2*dly*, Its death can be poſitively proved by living witneſſes †. It is needleſs to multiply words in a clear caſe. There are numbers within theſe walls who actually ſaw it die, and many of them, I am poſitive, would declare as much before the congregation, if I were to deſire

† This is what is called *the proof from teſtimony.*

ſire them. To what purpoſe elſe was there a deputation of elders diſpatched upon the ſpot to me, to deſire me to think upon ſomething for the funeral ſermon?—I, for my part, have nothing to do in it; I was not preſent at their death; they may be dead or not for me. All I have to do is to preach the funeral oration as I was deſired. But,

3*dly*, Their death may be proved from general opinion. This is no inconſiderable addition to the argument, and muſt not be omitted. If it were their friends only who aſſerted this fact, it might be thought to proceed from partiality. If it were their enemies only who aſſerted it, it might be thought they had ſome deſign to ſerve. But friends and enemies, and people of all ranks and principles, without one contrary voice, univerſally agree that they are dead. In ſhort, there has not been ſo general a concurrence concerning any one point within the compaſs of my memory.

4*thly*, The laſt argument I ſhall adduce on this head, and indeed it is an unanſwerable one, is the evidence of your own ſenſes. They are ſtill to be ſeen. They are not yet buried*. You have conſequently an opportunity of ſeeing the matter of fact with your own eyes. I deſire you, therefore, to look. Examine, inſpect the brethren one by one, and ſay upon your conſciences, if you do not think that they are dead men.

* Was not this lucky?—Upon the whole: I think he has proved his firſt point demonſtrably, and placed it beyond all cavil.

Having cleared this point, and ſhewed that our brethren are really dead, we may now proceed, without farther hindrance, to the *firſt* thing propoſed, which was to ſhew,—

That our departed brethren of the C—m—tee actually died in the Lord.

And, in the 1*ſt* place, I appeal to you all, if it is not very likely. Open your eyes, Chriſtians! and view them as they lie round that table. Obſerve their poſtures, their attitudes! Contemplate them on all ſides. Behold that ſweet ſerenity which is painted on their faces! Behold that complaceney, and, at the ſame time, that manly gravity in their looks! They are reclined in the moſt eaſy manner, the head lying on the right arm, the hand open as ſtill to receive, their wigs compoſed, and their whole deportment ſuch as becomes dead ſaints. On many of their faces you may obſerve a placid ſmile; and their mouths are all wide open, as if ſtill praiſing the Lord. Ah! theſe are not the dying looks, the agonies of the damned. The reprobated, in their laſt moments, writhe their faces, and ſet their muſcles in another manner. If they had been going to hell, they would have left us ſome marks of it. Their fiſts would have been clenched, their teeth ſhut, or at leaſt their wigs diſtorted to one ſide. The wicked leave a vile grin upon their faces. There is no ſuch thing here. All is decent, and compoſed. Sleep on, ſweet lambs! and take your reſt. Your toils are now

over;

over; and, I truſt, you are enjoying your reward ‡.

2*dly*, They died in the Lord, becauſe charity obliges us to hope ſo.—† It is a rule among

 Chriſtians,

‡ The reader muſt attend to the ſcenery here. When the brethren died, no man ventured to put his hand to them, either to put them up in coffins as ought to have been done, or even to muffle them in the ordinary dead-dreſs. They were ſuffered to remain each in the preciſe poſture and attitude in which he expired; and in this ſituation, expoſed to the view of all the hearers, they were when this ſermon was preached. What the motive of their friends in this was, it is hard to affirm. Poſſibly our author inclined it ſhould be ſo, and might give ſecret directions for this purpoſe. He might not improbably think that his diſcourſe would be more affecting, while they enforced by their perſonal preſence what he ſhould ſay in their praiſe. He might remember the effect which the producing Cæſar's dead body had upon the Romans, and what wonderful energy the old ſhirt he had on when he died gave to Mark Anthony's oration. Accordingly we ſee he takes advantage of this circumſtance here, and draws a moſt ingenious argument from it in favour of his dead brethren. But whatever might be the motive, it is ſufficient for our purpoſe to notice the fact. The orthodox are often obliged to appear myſterious, and to keep the ſprings of their actions out of ſight. This ſeems to be the caſe here. We ſhall not therefore inquire farther what their reaſons were for delaying the funeral. They could not ſurely entertain the leaſt hope that their brethren would ever revive again. Yet the waiting ſome days was of no great moment in any event, and might give them ſatisfaction in this point. There muſt have been ſomething at the bottom which we ſee not. I am aſſured, from the beſt authority, that at the time this ſermon was delivered, there was not ſo much as a bit of flannel bought for their dead-ſhirts; I could never even hear of any body who was beſpoke to make them; nor, in ſhort, was there any one preparation made, which uſes, in like caſes, to precede a decent interment.

† Here the boundaries of charity are diſtinctly deſcribed, and the rules of it enunciated with very great preciſion. 1*ſt*, Suppoſing orthodoxy out of the queſtion,—Charity is only to be exerciſed

Chriſtians, and it ought always to be obſerved, except with regard to heretics, that when there happen to be two ſuppoſitions, tho' equally probable in themſelves, yet the one having a grain of

ciſed where the two contrary ſuppoſitions are *equally* probable. If the *leſs* charitable one be the more probable of the two, in however ſlight a degree, it muſt be adopted; Charity muſt yield to evidence. This is ſtrictly philoſophical. In the balancing of evidence the *heart* ought never to be admitted except in one caſe, *viz.* to turn the balance when the ſteel-yard is exactly horizontal. It may be objected, That this rule ſeems, upon the whole, too favourable to ſlander. But this is a miſtake. The generality of character-mongers, I may ſay, of mankind, never attain to this degree, and thoſe who do are regarded as marvellouſly benevolent. In ſtrict juſtice, according to our accurate author, beyond it is ſinful; at leaſt, it is a weakneſs which an orthodox Chriſtian ought to indulge as ſeldom as poſſible. Accordingly it will be granted, that they do not indulge it often; and it is extremely unphiloſophical, and even uncharitable, to blame them for this. 2*dly*, The circumſtance of orthodoxy, when it interpoſes, will make a conſiderable difference in all caſes. 1. If two ſuppoſitions be equally probable and charitable, this additional circumſtance, it is plain, muſt weigh down which ever of the ſcales it is put into. 2. If they are unequal in theſe reſpects, it muſt, when thrown into the lighter ſcale, make good the difference, and prove beſides a conſiderable overbalance. To ſplit this laſt caſe into its parts; and to keep to the idea of charity: (1.) If the charitable ſuppoſition weigh down the other, though ever ſo inconſiderably; yet the cauſe of the Lord, being *heavy metal*, if it chance to lie upon the oppoſite ſide, as it frequently does, will make the uncharitable ſcale preponderate, and turn the balance effectually. Thus, to drop this metaphor, in order to take up another; in the caſe of Mr F—rg—ſ—n of K-lw-nn-ng, the queſtion was, *Proſecute him or not?* Charity called out on this occaſion, and ſo loud, that the orthodox certainly heard it, *Not proſecute.* Mr F—rg—ſ—n, in the 1*ſt* place, had ſhewn himſelf to be a man of ſingular diſintereſtedneſs and benevolence. It was, no doubt, a known fact, that he was eminent in doing good offices,—and not always, as is generally the caſe, to thoſe who did not ſtand in need of them—and that one of his chief pleaſures conſiſted in indulging this diſpoſition. In the 2*d* place, He was an old, infirm man; and it certainly

of charity more than the other, we are to embrace that which is the more charitable. Indeed if orthodoxy be concerned, this rule does not hold; becauſe then the cauſe of the Lord is in agitation, and the ſupporting this is often inconſiſtent with humanity, which muſt, in that caſe, be ſacrificed. If our dead brethren

tainly could not appear humane, but rather the contrary, to oppreſs him at theſe years with church-proſecutions, and ſend him to his grave, as a reward of his benevolence, ſome years ſooner than in the courſe of nature it is be preſumed he would have gone. Charity therefore ſpoke *out* on this occaſion, and, as was before obſerved, repeated loudly, *Not proſecute*. But orthodoxy ſtood upon the other ſide, and, with great juſtice, over-ruled her. This might to ſome ſeem the more difficult, as gratitude put alſo in a word on the occaſion; ſome of thoſe who had reaped largely of the pannel's good offices chancing at that time to be in the oppoſite party. But all availed not. Orthodoxy is too ſtrong a party for any of the virtues, or indeed for all of them together, to contend with. It carried, therefore, *Proſecute*. And to ſhew how little humanity has, or, indeed, ought to have to ſay in ſuch a caſe, it was even the general opinion of our party, that the pannel's crime was ſufficiently atrocious to warrant an *auta da ſe*, if the laws were as ſtrict as they ought to be; and that he deſerved to be tied to the ſtake—with all his helpers about him—and the whole burnt to aſhes at the market-croſs of Gl—ſg—w. 2*d*, The ſecond caſe is, where the uncharitable ſuppoſition is the more probable, but then *orthodoxy* chances to be on the other party. In this caſe it is plain, that *probability*, which is always more than a match for *charity* by herſelf, muſt give way to *charity* and *orthodoxy* when *united*. This is clear. Here *charity* and *orthodoxy* go triumphantly hand in hand, and muſt bear down all oppoſition. *Charity* rejoices exceedingly when ſhe finds herſelf joined with *orthodoxy*. In this caſe, ſhe has not near ſo many difficulties to encounter as when ſhe ſtands alone. Many inſtances from fact—what pity we have not room to inſert them—might be adduced to confirm this. This is the way, particularly, in which *brethren* are brought off from what we call *ſcrapes*. *E. G.*

In ſhort, theſe rules are admirable, and diſcover an uncommon degree of religious knowledge.

thren had been heretics, the caſe would certainly have been different. On that ſuppoſition, it would have been extremely hard to prove that they died in the Lord. For my part, I confeſs it would have exceeded my abilities, and I ſhould never have attempted it. Indeed it is probable, and partly for that very reaſon, that, in ſuch an event, I would not have been employed to deliver the funeral oration. But, the affair ſtanding as it does, my taſk is much eaſier. As the cauſe is not concerned, I am under no neceſſity to believe them damned: On the contrary, I ought in charity to believe they are ſaved. *Accordingly, I confeſs, I do incline to believe ſo* †. Let us place this argument in another

† This is the learned manner of expreſſion. The mitigated form of ſpeech poſſeſſes great dignity, and—eſpecially when one is not ſure of a point—is an infallible mark of candour. It is a gentle way of perſuading uſed in doubtful caſes, and is very happily employed here by our author. It is much more effectual with all ingenuous minds than the moſt peremptory aſſertions. It is, beſides, the mark of a true philoſopher, who ought never to appear poſitive upon any ſubject; neither ought he to ſeem much intereſted. Our author, accordingly, obſerves this rule here. In demonſtrable caſes indeed,—and ſuch caſes occur not unfrequently to him,—he is very confident, and with reaſon; But what is merely probable, he always delivers as ſuch. At the ſame time, as the point he is at preſent labouring is of very great conſequence to his deceaſed brethren, he neglects no argument, however minute, which gives it the leaſt addition of ſtrength; keeping in his eye this material rule of reaſoning, that, though a ſingle argument may be good for nothing taken by itſelf, yet a number of ſuch arguments bound together will make up a very good evidence;—an evidence on which not merely heaven and hell in the future ſtate, as in the preſent caſe, but, which to people who balance evidence, is ſtill more concluſive, even life and fortune in this world do often depend. See the proceedings in the D—g—s c—ſe.

another light. Upon the ſtrict principles of *election*;—as other circumſtances are balanced—it is equal to the Lord whether they are damned or ſaved. Here then we have a noble opportunity of diſplaying our humanity. Let us believe them ſaved rather than damned, even tho' the probabilities were equal. But,

3*dly*, Another proof that they died in the Lord is this very circumſtance, that they were *orthodox*. The principle here is very ſimple, and muſt ſtrike you all with conviction. You know, my brethren! that, long before this world was, it was ſettled in the eternal counſels of God, for ever to be adored, that ſuch and ſuch folks ſhould be elected to ſalvation, and ſuch and ſuch others to damnation. This cannot be denied without hereſy; and I am not at preſent preaching, I truſt, to heretics. The firſt of theſe claſſes of men, you all know, we we call, for diſtinction's ſake, the *elect*. Now, how are we to know who are the *elect?* I aſk not how we are to know the reprobated, for they are generally pretty well known. But how are we to know the *elect?* Is there no diſtinguiſhing mark by which, even in this world, they may be known and diſcerned from other men? Has the ſupreme diſpoſer left the affairs of this world in ſuch confuſion, as that his little ones have no common ſign by which, even in this ſtate, they may know one another? Chriſtians! I own, I have beſtowed a good deal of pains upon this ſubject, and this circumſtance makes me the bolder. It appeared to me extremely

ſtrange

ſtrange and unaccountable, that every other claſs and profeſſion of men ſhould have ſome peculiar mark by which they are known and diſtinguiſhed from all others; and that theſe two claſſes, of more importance ſurely than all the reſt put together, ſhould have no mark, no diſtinction, by which they ſhould be known ‡; but that we ſhould be in perpetual hazard of miſtaking a ſaint for a ſinner, a choſen one for a reprobate. I confeſs, there appeared to me to be here *a kind of contradiction* *. A negro is diſtinguiſhed from a white by the blackneſs of his ſkin; a labouring man from a gentleman, by the hardneſs of his hands †—there is no other diſtinction that I know of ‡;—a lady from a country-girl, by the reſervedneſs of her outward behaviour; a profeſſor of divinity from a drinker of punch, to take a familiar inſtance, by a certain ſettled dignity which ſits ſupremely enthroned on his whole countenance, and which is never ſeen to be diſcompoſed, except when he happens to engage in an argument;—and, in general, you cannot be long in any man's company, without

‡ There is abſolutely no knowing them.

* Another learned form of ſpeech, and uſual with our author.

† Illuſtrations, from the pulpit eſpecially, ought always to be familiar.

‡ It may be obſerved, that our author ſometimes approaches very near to ſatire. But of this he is extremely ſparing, and always introduces it with proper dignity. A funeral ſermon is, indeed, an improper place for it to make its appearance in at any rate,—which may be one reaſon why he is ſo remarkably ſhy of uſing it in this diſcourſe.

without finding out and diſcerning his particular profeſſion, trade, or occupation. Now, I confeſs, I was aſtoniſhed beyond meaſure to find this univerſally to be the caſe through all ranks and profeſſions in life, except this one—the very one which was of greater conſequence, of more real importance, than them all. Accordingly, being naturally of an inquiſitive turn myſelf, and rather addicted to metaphyſics than otherwiſe, I ſet apart the hours I could ſpare from the duties of my profeſſion, to inquire what that mark was which diſtinguiſhes, even in this life, the *elect* from thoſe who are appointed to damnation, and to ſee if it were poſſible by human ſtudy to inveſtigate it *. For this purpoſe, I turned over a vaſt variety of authors, and by that means much enlarged my ſphere of reading †. I firſt conſulted that ſagacious inquirer into nature, Solomon. I read over all his works which

* It muſt be owned at leaſt that it was a very curious inquiry, and well worth the learned pains which the author beſtowed upon it.

† It is a rule known among the learned, that, when a perſon enters upon a courſe of reading, he ought always to have a particular object in view;—no matter what the object be, the effect is the ſame. I have heard of a gentleman who read over a huge folio volume of bad Latin, with no other view in the world, than to ſee whether the word *fungus* was to be found in that book; nor could it be of any other ſervice to him whatever, after he had read it. It is true he found not the particular word he ſought for,—though, by the by, I aſſure him it is there,—but that was all a matter. He roſe from it a learned man, and has ſupported that character ever ſince by ſimilar experiments. The juſtice of this rule is ſtill farther confirmed by the example of our author here.

remain to us, carefully—beginning at the Proverbs. But I could find no trace in this author of what I was ſeeking. I confeſs, it appears to me dubious, whether he even knew the diſtinction itſelf. I might ſay the ſame thing of many others of the ſacred authors, but I forbear. Leaving the Bible, therefore, I next applied to the fathers. With great care I read Irenæus, Clement, Tertullian, Juſtin Martyr, St Jerome, Gregory Nazianzen, and the reſt of them. But what coſt me moſt labour was twenty folio volumes of St Auguſtine, which I read from beginning to end, and which kept me cloſe employed for ſeven years. If I got not what I wanted, I made at leaſt many valuable extracts from theſe writers; and, beſides, I could now ſay that I had read the *fathers*. Then I conſulted Bellarmine. I confeſs, I got ſome valuable hints from *him*. But ſtill I remained wide of my principal purpoſe. Having exhauſted the whole body of divinity, I turned, in deſpair, to the claſſic authors. I read the whole of them, Greek and Latin—Herodot, Thucydid, Xenophon, Plato, Ariſtotle, Homer, Heſiod, Euripid, Sophocles, Cicero, Virgil, Horace, Salluſt, Cæſar's Commentaries of his wars in Gaul, Suetonius's Lives of the Emperors, Velleius Paterculus, Quintilian, Titus Livius, Tacitus, Florus's Abridgment, Cornelius Nepos *excellentium Imperatorum*, Eutropius, down to Eraſmus and Corderius, and the Fables of Phædrus—nothing eſcaped me. But not a word of election was to be found in the whole. All

here

here was groſs and heatheniſh darkneſs. However, this courſe of reading too was not without its advantages; as in that time I committed a conſiderable part of Corderius to memory —which I can ſtill repeat upon occaſion—and three odes of Horace. Deſpairing, therefore, of being able to find it out by *reading*, I endeavoured next to arrive at it by dint of reflection. For this purpoſe, I ſhut myſelf up during three whole months of the ſummer-vacation. I thought cloſe, and was very gloomy all that time. I was viſible to none, and it was imagined that I was actually gone out of the country—ſome thought to Ireland, upon a viſit to the B——p. However, it was not ſo. I was ſtill in my own houſe, up two pair of ſtairs, ſtudying hard both night and day,—except the time I ſlept. I often faſted, and prayed fervently to the Lord for light in this affair. And at laſt, by the bleſſing of God upon my endeavours, and the hint I got from Bellarmine, I diſcovered what I wanted. The argument is long, and ſhall be ſent to the preſs, and made public in due time‡. It ſufficeth here to ſay, that I found out, with a conviction equal to demonſtration, that the mark which diſtinguiſhes the *elect* from the *reprobate* in this life is—*orthodoxy*.

Here then is a plain proof of our propoſition, *viz.* That our brethren of the C—m—tee died in the

 Lord.

‡ Would to God it were public already! Dear D—ct—r! let us have it as ſoon as poſſible.

Lord. They were *orthodox:* therefore, they were *elected*; therefore, they died in the Lord. Nothing can be clearer. The mark is ſimple and obvious—now that it is diſcovered—to the meaneſt capacity. Whenever, therefore, you want to know whether ſuch a perſon be in heaven, you have nothing to do but to inquire whether he was orthodox while he was on the earth.

It may be ſtill farther aſked, What is the foundation on which this mark itſelf is founded? What is the connection between orthodoxy and election *? To this I content myſelf at preſent with replying in the words of Principal Campbell to David Hume: "In our inveſtigation of "principles we muſt ſtop ſomewhere. There "are certain original perceptions in human na- "ture beyond which we cannot, or need not go." Now this is the preſent caſe. I appeal to all the orthodox, whether they *feel* not this connection —I mean between orthodoxy and election —in their own minds? Now, this *feeling* being acknowledged, I am not obliged, by any rule of metaphyſical reaſoning now known, to advance a ſtep farther. I chuſe to ſtop here †. But,

4*thly*, Another proof that they died in the Lord is this—they died in the exerciſe of their duty. This I prove,

1. This

* The objector forgets, ſure, that the author has promiſed to publiſh it.

† So that this argument is really as deep in human nature as philoſophers have diſcovered the foundations of morals and evidence to be.

1. This C—m—tee was expreſsly appointed by their immediate ſuperiors, the ſynod, to conſtitute, and cognoſce this affair. Now it is the duty of a C—m—tee, happen what will, to obey a ſynod; and if the conſequence of this obedience be death, then it muſt follow, from every principle of juſtice, that the next conſequence muſt be *glory*.

To make this ſtill plainer †, I ſhall relate an affair which lately happened to myſelf, and which, had it been attended with its natural effect, would effectually have prevented me from officiating here this day *.

Two low-minded boys took it into their heads one day to travel up to the d-v-n-ty library, and to lay their hands upon ſome books which had been long ſtationed there †. Theſe books they thought proper to withdraw from the ſaid library,

‡ It was plain enough before, but our author is full upon every point he handles.

* That had been a thouſand pities!

† Among the worthy, old preachers, no cuſtom was more common than the bringing in a familiar ſtory to illuſtrate ſome point in their ſubject. This laudable cuſtom, which is going faſt into deſuetude, our author attempts here to revive. And certainly nothing is more proper to engage the attention of the audience, than a pertinent little ſtory, properly brought in, and aptly told. It is pity that our modern preachers, amidſt that ſovereign contempt they diſcover for the practices of their venerable predeceſſors, ſhould not retain ſuch of their cuſtoms as are really commendable. It is hoped the example of our author here will have ſome weight with them, and induce them not to condemn the cuſtoms of their anceſtors in the *groſs*, not to reject the good with the evil, nor to baniſh theſe inſtructive little hiſtories entirely from the pulpit, merely becauſe they were uſed there threeſcore years ago.

library, without conſulting me, or giving me a receipt for the ſame, as they ought to have done. The ſmalleſt bit of paper in the world would have anſwered this purpoſe; and had it been put into my hands by either of theſe boys, I declare I ſhould never have thought of it further. But miſſing my books one day accidentally, and finding no receipt for them in my cuſtody, though I carefully inſpected the whole parcel, I was obliged to lay the affair before the f-c-lty. I told them, that ſomebody had withdrawn ſome books from my library, and had not left a receipt. This action the f-c-lty, after cognoſcing for ſome time, found, by a conſiderable majority, to be *theft*; and, by way of puniſhment, adjudged the boys, who were by this time, luckily for *me*, diſcovered, to be expelled from the un-v-ſ-ty. All this I thought very fair. But what I was not quite ſo clear about was this: Their ſentence was to be pronounced publicly, upon a certain day; and I, in virtue of an office I then held, was the perſon who was to pronounce it. Now, in the firſt place, this laid me under the neceſſity of delivering a long Latin prayer, and, which was almoſt as difficult, of making an oration in Engliſh, ſhewing the juſtice of the ſentence, and warning the remaining ſtudents, whenever they ſhould have occaſion for any books from my library, always to leave a receipt for them with me. All this was to be done with an audible voice. But the great hardſhip is ſtill behind: For, a day or two before the day

of

of judgment, a hint was conveyed to me, that one of theſe boys had been ſeen, not above three months before, carrying a piſtol in his hand. It was alſo aſſerted, that he had actually once or twice, upon what occaſion is not ſaid, had the courage to fire this piſtol fairly off into the air ; and that, aſſoon as ſhe had gone off, he had always been ſeen to charge her anew from a bag of powder and ſhot which he kept in his waiſtcoat-pocket. This intelligence, I thought, was by no means to be neglected. I, therefore, laid the matter honeſtly before the f-c-lty. I repreſented how dangerous it would be for *me* to expel a boy from the un-v-ſ-ty who could fire a piſtol. I urged, that there was a poſſibility that ſo daring a young creature might bring the piſtol *charged* into the public hall, and, while I was executing my office, might ſnap her full in my face, to the manifeſt danger of my life. I ſaid, that the leaſt conſequence to be expected was, that I would ſtumble in my Latin prayer from apprehenſion. I obſerved, that the piſtol might be eaſily concealed under his gown. In ſhort, I ſaid a great deal upon the occaſion. I was not, I confeſs, for driving a boy of ſuch ſpirit to extremities. I was ſenſible that, if he did preſent at me, the only chance I had for eſcaping was in caſe the piſtol ſhould miſs fire. Upon the whole, therefore, I was for diſmiſſing him privately. However, my motion was over-ruled, and I was obliged, againſt my will, I acknowledge, to truſt the event to providence.

dence. Now, what I would obſerve upon this tranſaction is: Here I was evidently placed in a moſt perilous ſituation. If the boy had ſhot me, as I dreaded, where would I, do you think, my good hearers! have gone? Would it have been to heaven, or to hell? I think I may ſafely truſt the event to your opinion. I appeal now to you all. To which of the two, think ye, would I have gone? To heaven, ſurely. For why? I was ſlain in the execution of my duty. My ſuperiors had placed me in that ſtation; and I durſt not flinch either to the right hand or the left, however deſirous I might have been. Had I fallen a ſacrifice, therefore, to the enraged boy, I muſt certainly have gone to heaven; and this might have fortified me, had I chanced to think of it, againſt my apprehenſions. Upon the whole; it is ſtill my opinion, that I never in my whole life was nearer *glory* than I was that day, nor ever, I judge, will be again. And yet I miſſed it ſomehow, as on other occaſions; and was doomed, as you ſee, to ſurvive the C—m—tee.

2. Upon this head.—That they died in the exerciſe of their duty, is placed beyond all doubt by this conſideration, That they died in the exerciſe, and aſſerting the right of perſecution †. And here it will be neceſſary to treat

† Here is one inſtance of that ingenuouſneſs of language formerly remarked. He expreſſes himſelf in the very words which his adverſaries would uſe were they reaſoning againſt him, and confutes them in their own diction.

treat a point, which alſo I have laboured at great length, and even wrought up, as I flatter myſelf, pretty near to a demonſtration. I ſhall attempt, in ſhort, to juſtify eccleſiaſtical perſecution upon philoſophical principles. I ſhall endeavour, in juſtice to my deceaſed brethren, to ſhew, that it is the duty of a clergyman to perſecute.

But as the reaſoning upon this curious ſubject is very long, and not to be well contained in a diſcourſe of this kind, I ſhall here juſt name ſome of the arguments by which it is demonſtrated, leaving their full illuſtrations to that publication of mine, which the world has ſo long expected, and which is actually to make its appearance ſoon †.

(1.) It is a known rule in metaphyſics, That *fact* and *right*, are different terms for the ſame thing. To make you underſtand this better, I ſhall uſe the words of a tolerable poet of our own country; "whatever *is*, is *right*." There never was a church upon earth but perſecuted; Jewiſh, Heathen, and Chriſtian; Papiſt, Epiſcopalian, Preſbyterian. I defy any man to name me one religious denomination which did not perſecute thoſe of a different opinion from themſelves. However widely they might differ in other points of leſs moment, in this capital one they are all agreed. I reaſon thus then: Since it is a *fact* that it *has* ſo happened, it muſt be *right* that it *ſhould* ſo happen. But,

† Would it were publiſhed!

(2.) It is another rule in modern philoſophy, which by the by has arrived at an aſtoniſhing pitch of perfection within theſe few years, That if the introduction of any cuſtom into ſociety, and its eſtabliſhment there, can be *accounted for*—this is the philoſophical term, the *vox ſignata*, as it is juſtly called—in other words, if I can tell the *way*, if I can deſcribe the *manner*, in which it came to be ſo introduced and eſtabliſhed; this *accounting for it*, this *deſcription* of its introduction and eſtabliſhment, is an actual juſtification of it*. Upon this principle I am to undertake the juſtification of religious perſecution, beginning with the ten perſecutions of the heathen emperors. The principle is this—let me repeat it—Thoſe of them which can be *accounted for* are *right*, and thoſe which cannot be *accounted for* are *wrong*. Now, I am to bring all religious perſecutions to this teſt, and to ſhew which are *right*, and which *not*. I think I have demonſtrated that they are always *right* when they proceed from the *church*, and *wrong* when they proceed from any other quarter. Becauſe, in the firſt caſe, that is to ſay, when they proceed from the *church*, we can always give a *ſolid* reaſon for their exiſtence; but we can give no reaſon, nor even ſee any *intereſt*, which can determine any other body of men to perſecute. In the

* So that we ſee his ſyſtem is built upon acknowledged philoſophical principles—principles, upon one or other of which all the reputable theories of modern times are raiſed, and which cannot now be controverted.

the firſt caſe, therefore, perſecution is *accountable*, and, therefore, *right*; in all other caſes, it is *unaccountable*, and, therefore, *wrong* †. This is the plan. I could give numerous inſtances from various celebrated authors, ſome of them ſtill alive, who have tried this method of philoſophiſing with ſucceſs, and find it by much the eaſieſt, and moſt compendious that has yet been invented ‡. But I forbear. Let it ſuffice to ſay, that I am at preſent engaged in another work, which, when it appears, will eſtabliſh this beyond diſpute *. I am going to preſent the world with a general juſtification of all the *virtues* upon this plan. I am going to prove the excellence of benevolence, of temperance, of juſtice, gratitude, and chaſtity, by deſcribing the *manner*, and even the *time*—I will be ſo particular as that—in which, and when, theſe virtues became faſhionable in ſociety.

† Exceſſively ingenious, and, at the ſame time, quite plain! He here marks the boundaries of laudable, religious perſecution, with critical exactneſs. He does not aſſert that *all* religious perſecution is laudable. No: It is only *one* particular kind of it which is ſo. It would be abſurd to ſay, that it were right in *every* caſe. It is only right when it proceeds from the *church*—that is, when it is directed againſt *heretics*—by which term we mean thoſe who differ in opinion, upon any point, from the eſtabliſhed church.

‡ He certainly, however, extends this principle rather farther than thoſe philoſophers have done, though his *modeſty* prevents him from declaring as much. The fact, I believe, is this—The *invention* of it is *theirs*, and the *application his*. So that he is really nearly as *original* as *they*.

* Another work!—This treatiſe ſeems to be upon the foundation of virtue—a queſtion which has long agitated philoſophers; but which, I hope, we ſhall now ſee fully cleared.

ciety. On the other hand, with regard to the *vices*—I am to demonſtrate their abſolute deformity conſidered in themſelves, and their pernicious tendency conſidered in their conſequences, from this ſole circumſtance, That their introduction into ſociety is utterly *unaccountable* upon any principles—unleſs upon the ſuppoſition of original ſin:—and this, by the way, will be, I flatter myſelf, the beſt confirmation of that important doctrine which has yet appeared. I will alſo make it appear, that its eſtabliſhment and long continuance in ſociety—eſpecially when we conſider what a conſtant fire the church has kept up againſt it for near theſe five thouſand years; how many thouſand miniſters have been ordained, pr-f-ſſ-rs of d--v-n-ty created; how regularly their ſalaries have been paid them; what churches have been built both in the Gothic and Corinthian taſte; what a number of fine ſermons, and treatiſes of various kinds, have been compoſed againſt it; what an immenſe multitude of heretics have been burnt, and ſouls damned, during that period—and, above all, what pains I myſelf have taken to extirpate it ‡—I ſay, when we conſider all theſe circumſtances, and many others not fit to be named here, I will make it plainly appear, that its having been able to keep its ground ſo long in ſociety, notwithſtanding all this, is ſtill more *unaccountable*

† He has taken very great pains for this purpoſe to my knowledge—and, I am ſorry, to obſerve, all to no purpoſe.

able than its introduction. In ſhort, this promiſes to be the completeſt confutation of Mandeville, and the ſimpleſt ſyſtem of morals which has yet appeared. The foundation of virtue, which has been long a digging for, will, I truſt, be now diſcovered, and laid open to the ſatisfaction of all the curious. But my ſcheme ſtops not here. From morals I propoſe to aſcend to divinity, where I will have an opportunity to diſplay theſe principles in their full extent §. Here I will demonſtrate the truth of the ſcriptures, and the divinity of the Chriſtian religion—without any of that toil and ſweat which has been employed in ſearching after external, internal, and collateral evidence—I ſay, I will demonſtrate their truth, by ſhewing particularly..... but I muſt not anticipate †. I propoſe in a few weeks, as a ſpecimen of the whole, to ſend abroad into the world a diſſertation, in which I ſhall endeavour, at ſome length, to juſtify the paſſage of the Iſraelites through the red ſea,—the whole proceeding upon theſe principles;—and to expoſe the preſumption and folly of Pharaoh in following them ‡.

(3.) Per-

§ What! Does he propoſe to reconcile divinity with his ſyſtem of morals? Nay, this is a real improvement. Our late ſyſtem-makers have not adverted to this point.

† It was quite right, and neceſſary, to ſtop here—for fear, as he ſays, of anticipating.

‡ This, I am aſſured, he is well able to do.

N. B. I am told our author has one other treatiſe, which I hope will ſee the light with the reſt. It is a reply to that argument

(3.) Perſecution may alſo be juſtified upon principles of *law*. We can plead *preſcription*, if it were neceſſary. Indeed there is a danger here, which I would earneſtly beg all on whoſe ſhoulders the care of the church is laid to advert to. The exerciſe of the right of perſecution may be ſo long interrupted, that this plea —I mean of *preſcription*—may be turned againſt us. To prevent this, it is the duty of the real well-wiſhers of the ch—h of Sc——nd, and I would beg leave to remind them of it, to raiſe a hereſy-proceſs at leaſt once in every twenty years. This is abſolutely neceſſary to ſave our *right*, which might elſe expire; and this was really, I do believe after all, the foundation of the proſecution againſt Mr F-rg-ſon *. It was undertaken by us, merely with a view to preſerve our invaluable privilege of perſecution, and prevent it from being preſcribed ‡. At leaſt, for my own part, I muſt confeſs ingenuouſly, that I never could diſcover any other reaſon for it †. And I believe that my brethren of the C—m—tee, if they were alive, would ſay the ſame thing; but they are dead, as you ſee, and need not now, alas! be appealed to.

3. And this renews my grief, and makes me proceed with the greater zeal in their vindication †.

gument of David Hume againſt the exiſtence of God. The intention of it is to ſhew, that, even granting his concluſion,—it does not affect the Chriſtian religion. It is, I am told, a very ingenious little diſſertation.

* An inſtance of his ingenuouſneſs of ſentiment.

‡ In fact, it was in ſome danger if they had not been clever.

† And a very good reaſon too. What other was neceſſary?

dication†. I ſay then, 3*dly*, That they died in the exerciſe of their duty, becauſe they died while they were acting agreeably to the ruling principles which God had implanted in their nature. Obſerve, that I take philoſophy along with me in every ſtep‡. To make this argument plain.—It is the duty of every creature of God, and he can never do wrong who follows it, to act according to thoſe directing principles which God, the author of all good, has been pleaſed to ingraft in its mould, and in the firſt frame of its conſtitution. Thus, to illuſtrate this by plain inſtances *—The principle of *fear* is implanted in the *hare*. This is her directing ſentiment. She ought, therefore, to follow invariably the impulſe of this principle; ſhe ought to ſcamper away at the leaſt appearance of danger; and ſhe is out of her duty if ſhe does not. Again: Boldneſs is implanted in the lion. He ought, therefore, when under the immediate influence of this principle, to *rage* and *roar*, until he make the foreſts tremble. This will make him be feared, as nature intended he ſhould be, and his authority reſpected by all the beaſts of the wood. Again, the dog is intended to guard his maſter's

† This gives him new ſpirits to proceed with his ſubject.

‡ Though he be preaching in the L—gh K-rk. Obſerve that. Our author has all along endeavoured to unite philoſophy and orthodoxy in his diſcourſes, and I think he has ſucceeded.

* This whole illuſtration is an inſtance, in point, of our author's familiar manner of philoſophiſing. There is none of that high philoſophical language which is but too frequent in our pulpits. Our author's philoſophy is upon the level of the meaneſt capacities.

ſter's houſe, and to prevent it from being plundered. He ought, therefore, to lay it down as a principle, that every body who approaches the houſe is a *thief*, and comes with no honeſt intentions. Hence it becomes his duty, eſpecially if the houſe be upon the ſide of a road, to *bark* almoſt inceſſantly, in order to alarm the people within, and to put them on their guard againſt thoſe without. To paſs from beaſts to men—for in the eye of *philoſophy* there is no difference. Every man too has ſome predominant principle, which it is his duty to act agreeably to; and he errs from the road of nature who does not *. Thus, ſome feel themſelves wonderfully diſpoſed to idleneſs, and are born with an utter incapacity for all ſerious buſineſs: Theſe ought to go into the *army*. Others are born with talents which riſe no higher than the common rules of arithmetic: Theſe ought to be *merchants*. Others are poſſeſſed with an abſolute indifference for money, and feel not the ſmalleſt deſire within themſelves of making a fortune: Theſe ought, to a *man*, to commence *miniſters*, and go into the ch—h of Sc——nd. And as in claſſes, ſo in individuals. The turn of one lies towards mathematics; of another, towards poetry and the tender paſſions; of a third, towards mechanics; of a fourth, towards ſatire; of a fifth, towards phyſic and compounding of clyſters: One is born

* In the following detail he has an opportunity to diſplay his knowledge of the world, and of human nature—in which ſcience it appears he is no mean proficient.

born to think, another to ſpeak, another to write, a fourth to act; one man is made for painting, another for dancing, another for muſic and playing on the fiddle; and people ſay, that my genius is calculated for metaphyſics, and the diſtinguiſhing of differences. Now to apply this reaſoning. It is well known to many of you, that the predominant diſpoſition of your deceaſed brethren lay towards *perſecution*. Their talents were admirably calculated for hunting heretics, and they had an inſatiable thirſt after church proſecutions. Theſe were, truly ſpeaking, the directing principles of their conſtitution. Hence in their ſermons, as you may remember, they talked much of *blood*, and uſed many other ſanguinary terms, expreſſive of this temper. I ſay, then, that it was incumbent on them, above all things, to gratify thoſe diſpoſitions of which nature had been ſo liberal to them; I ſay, it was indiſpenſibly incumbent on them to act agreeably to thoſe ruling principles which were implanted in their conſtitution; and, as they actually died while they were endeavouring to do this, I ſay that they died in the exerciſe of their *duty*, and, conſequently, died in the Lord *.

Thus I have endeavoured to prove the firſt point, *viz.* That our deceaſed brethren of the C—m—tee died in the Lord †. I have, I think,

 evinced

* There never was a more concluſive argument invented by the wit of man.

† Let it be obſerved here, that, among all the reaſons he has aſſigned

evinced it to a *demonſtration*, although I have rendered it but *probable*. You will look upon this as a paradox—but I beg leave to inform you of another truth, which has been lately diſcovered, *viz.* that probability in *morals* is equal to demonſtration in *mathematics* *. Proceed we now to the ſecond thing propoſed—which was to ſhew,

II. That if they had died in any other manner than that in which they did die, they would have died *out* of the Lord. On this we muſt be more brief.

In the 1*ſt* place, then—Let us examine their faces a ſecond time. It was obſerved, that the complacency which appears *there* is a ſtrong proof that they died in the Lord. In like manner, on the other ſide, if this complacency, this ſupreme compoſure, ſo viſible on the countenances of theſe men, had been wanting; if, on the contrary, they had exhibited any viſible marks of diſtreſs in their laſt moments; if they had left their fiſts clenched, their brows bent, or if the wrong ſide of their wigs had been turned foremoſt; in all, or any of theſe caſes, I ſhould have concluded, that it was extremely probable they had gone to hell, and, conſequently, had died *out* of the Lord. But,

2*dly*, If they had been *heretics*, there would have

aſſigned why his deceaſed brethren died in the Lord, there is no mention made of *good works*. I defy all the world, therefore, to charge our author here with *hereſy*.

* This truth is ſo plain, that it has even been affirmed by a decree of the C——t of S——n, though the P——t,—who are no philoſophers,—have thought proper to reverſe it.

have been ſtill ſtronger grounds for believing that they had died *out* of the Lord. The reaſon is plain. In that caſe they would have wanted that viſible mark, which we ſay diſtinguiſhes the elect from the reprobate even in this life, and makes them known—to one another—beyond poſſibility of miſtake——*viz.* ORTHODOXY. Wanting this, according to the principles laid down in that treatiſe of mine which is to be publiſhed, we would have had the ſureſt grounds for believing that they were not *elected*; and if ſo, I leave it to your judgments, whether, in the nature of things, they could have died in the Lord.

On this head I muſt alſo take the liberty to obſerve farther, that, had they been heretics, the circumſtance of their ſudden departure itſelf would have militated againſt them. God may call a man ſuddenly out of this world upon two accounts, and in two very different ways. He may be ſo called out of it, either on account of great *reprobacy*, or of great *favour*. If the firſt—he is generally ſtruck dead with a thunderbolt, or a fit of the apoplexy: ſometimes too the earth opens, and ſwallows him up. If the laſt be the caſe—he is uſually elevated on a ſudden from off the ground, and carried up to heaven in a chariot of fire, as in the inſtance of Elijah. Now, inſtances of this laſt kind having been very rare of late, if our deceaſed brethren had been *heretics*, the preſumption, from the manner of their death, would have lien againſt them; and we might have

had good reaſon to look upon this extraordinary diſpenſation as a ſignal judgment executed upon them on account of ſome enormous crime they had been guilty of, and which the world did not know—and, conſequently, we would, in all probability, have ranked them in the firſt claſs, which we have juſt mentioned. But as they were ſtrictly *orthodox*, and, conſequently, certainly *elected*, we are now ſure that this is a diſpenſation of *love*; and that they are to be ranked in the ſecond claſs, *viz.* of thoſe whom God, on account of extraordinary favour, on account of the great delight he takes in them—for virtues which the world is often ſo blind as not to perceive—takes to himſelf before their time, and elevates, if I may uſe the expreſſion, to a ſtate of premature happineſs. It may be objected, That no fiery chariot was ſeen to come for them, as uſed to be the caſe of old. To this it is replied, 1. For ought we know there might, though we did not ſee it. We read of the mountain being full of chariots of fire about Eliſha; and yet his ſervant could not, for ſome time, diſcern them. 2. God is not obliged to follow this method always. We read of no fiery chariot coming for Enoch. He may even, if he pleaſes, reverſe this rule, and come, in time, to ſend his fiery chariots for heretics. There is no certain ſtandard for theſe things. But, 3. There is a very plain reaſon for it in this caſe. For if a fiery chariot had come down for the C—m—tee, and ſtopped before the door of the L—gh K—rk; or if it had

had remained ſuſpended in the air, above the town, at about half a mile's diſtance, we ſhall ſuppoſe, and the brethren been taken up to it in a whirlwind; ſo unuſual an appearance would have ſtruck ſuch terror into all as might have been productive—eſpecially with regard to women—of the moſt terrible conſequences. Had the C—m—tee, indeed, ſat in a wilderneſs, or upon the banks of the river Jordan, or any where remote from a populous city, I make no doubt but they might have been taken away in this manner; and had my brother Fr—b—rn been left to carry the tidings, I venture to ſay, that, he would have atteſted as much, ſo ſoon as ever he arrived at D—mb—rt—n. So that, upon the whole, there is really no foundation for this objection. But,

3*dly*, If they had died in any other way than that in which they did die, they would have died *out* of the Lord, becauſe they would have died out of the exerciſe of their duty. It was obſerved, that it is the duty of a C—m—tee to obey the court which appoints them. If, therefore, the C—m—tee had expired in any other exerciſe, they would have been damned for diſobeying the ſynod.——Let us attend to the reaſon on which this concluſion is founded. In ſo doing we ſhall arrive at the foundation and ſanctions of church-power*; a ſubject which it is abſolutely neceſſary we ſhould be acquainted with, in order to be able, in our own minds, to juſtify our

* Here is another moſt curious ſubject, and which produces a train of fine philoſophical reaſoning.

our deceaſed brethren, and for want of a thorough knowledge of which many have too haſtily, it muſt be confeſſed, condemned them.

When we conſider things in the *abſtract*, as they affect our intellects and not our ſenſes, which is the true way of conſidering them—that is to ſay, when we contemplate the ſubject in itſelf, without being clogged with any of theſe accidental circumſtances which we call *matters of fact*;—we will ſee, that the foundation of all reward and puniſhment is the obedience or breach of a *rule*, impoſed by a ſuperior, whoſe ſuperiority with reſpect to us we do, or ought to acknowledge. Laying down this principle—Now, Chriſtians! let me beg your attention; this is a very deep ſpeculation, and will juſtify the C—m—tee fully, if we can but get it made out—I ſay, laying down this principle, it will follow, that the hainouſneſs of a crime conſiſts, not in the nature of the crime itſelf, but in the breach of that *rule* which forbade this crime to be committed. Hence it will follow alſo, that the conſideration of the crime in itſelf is of no manner of conſequence; be it great or little, the *rule* is the ſame, and, conſequently, the puniſhment. Thus, to take an inſtance which you of this kirk are all well acquainted with—You would not think that the eating an apple, provided it be wholeſome, and the rind properly pared off, was a matter of any conſequence at all. And neither it is, conſidered in *itſelf*, I confeſs. But if our ſuperior, whoever he be—I wiſh I may make myſelf

myſelf underſtood ‡!—I ſay, if our lawful ſuperior make a *rule*, expreſsly forbidding this apple to be eaten; and if any man or woman, knowing this *rule*, ſhall put forth his or her hand to this apple, and eat it with as much compoſure as if no ſuch rule had been made—you will agree with me, that this alters the caſe entirely. I ſay, let the apple be ever ſo wholeſome, there is no degree of puniſhment which ſuch men or women deſerves not, in ſuch a caſe, to endure. Accordingly, as you all know, Adam was actually damned for this very thing, and all his poſterity after him—in which number, my friends! we are *. Now, upon weighing the whole circumſtances of this affair, and finding nothing reprehenſible in the *fact*; I concluded, upon juſt premiſes, that the crime muſt lie in the breach of the *rule*, and in that *only*. Here, then, is likewiſe the foundation of church power. For, by abſtracting from circumſtances of particular caſes, we have, from this and other inſtances, formed a general propoſition, *viz.* "That in the nature of "things, the breach of a rule is *damnable*, con-"ſidered in *itſelf* ‡." And this propoſition holds whoever may be the *impoſer*, whether God or man,

‡ This is the deepeſt diſquiſition of all.

* The deplorable fall of our firſt parents is but too ſeldom touched upon in theſe days by our modern preachers. At the ſame time, it is a topic, which, I will venture to ſay, can never be too frequently inculcated from the pulpit. Our author accordingly introduces it here, and it is hoped his example will be followed.

‡ This is a moſt ingenious application of the doctrine of abſtraction.

man, and whatever may be the particular occaſion of the impoſition. Theſe are but circumſtances, and have no relation to the nature of the thing conſidered in *itſelf*. The abſtract propoſition muſt hold in all caſes. This, then, is the principle of our authority as a church; here is the ground upon which we ſtand. Our power ſtands upon the ſame bottom with the doctrine of original ſin, and is ſupported by arguments equally ſtrong. But waving this at preſent—From the above premiſes it follows, that the actual breach of any of our *rules*, by any of our own members—whether theſe *rules* are laid down in our Confeſſion, or acts of Aſſembly; or whether they be the verbal orders of an aſſembly, a ſynod, a preſbytery, or a kirk-ſeſſion—is conſidered in *itſelf damnable*. Indeed it may, I believe, like other ſins, be repented of; and this is one of our motives for proſecuting heretics. We want to inflict ſome ſlight puniſhment, ſuch as *depoſition*, upon them in this life; that, ſeeing the evil of their courſes, they may, by this gentle chaſtiſement, be induced to repent, and ſo be ſaved in the day of the Lord. In like manner, it is here that the great hainouſneſs of hereſy itſelf lies. The church, a long time ago, was pleaſed to command all her members, in all time coming, to believe certain doctrines to be true. If, then, any of them, knowing this expreſs *order*, ſhall nevertheleſs, in his heart, dare to diſbelieve any of thoſe doctrines which he is abſolutely commanded to believe; I ſay, this muſt be a

damnable

damnable ſin, and cannot be too ſeverely animadverted upon. Again, the ch—ch commands us to proſecute heretics. If we, therefore, were ever ſo infatuated as to diſobey this rule—which I hope we never ſhall—we thereby, upon the foregoing grounds, ſubject ourſelves to the penalty of damnation. And this is the true reaſon of the keenneſs which we diſcover in ſuch proſecutions †; and which, indeed, can often be accounted for upon no other principle. Let us apply this to the caſe in hand.

The ſynod immediately foregoing *ordered expreſsly* ſeveral of their own members to conſtitute themſelves into a C—m—tee, and to proſecute this hereſy. Theſe members obeyed, as it was their duty to do; and while they were proceeding,—as faſt as they could,—in obedience to this order, it pleaſed the Lord to take them all, in a very extraordinary manner, it muſt be confeſſed, out of the land of the living. I ſay, then, that if they had died employed in any other affair than that in which they were employed at that time, they muſt have been damned, upon the acknowledged principles of church authority, for diſobeying the orders of the ſynod. For the ſynod had expreſsly ordered them to apply themſelves to

 this

† Without doubt. This muſt be the reaſon certainly. What other motive could make them ſo ſinfully zealous—if I may uſe the expreſſion? Would they ever act contrary to all the laws of humanity, gratitude, and charity—as we ſee they are often obliged to do—unleſs they were ſenſible that it was a matter on which their own eternal ſalvation abſolutely depended?

this particular affair, and to none other. Nay, I aſſert further, upon the ſame grounds of ch—h-power by which our ſtandards and all that is venerable in our conſtitution ſtand ſupported, that if the ſ-n-d had ordered every member of the C—m—tee to eat a *frog*,—if the C—m—tee had been conſtituted for *this* purpoſe,—it was their duty to have done it, and they would been damned for diſobedience. They might have appealed, it is true, to the aſſ—bly. They might have remonſtrated that it is no where mentioned in the Confeſſion of Faith that any m-n-ſt-r of this ch—ch ſhall be obliged to eat a *frog*—otherwiſe they would moſt chearfully do it *. They might have alledged, that there is no law for it, and that the ſynod was not warranted by precedent to force ſuch a *canon* down their throats, and which went ſo much againſt their ſtomachs. For theſe reaſons, they might have prayed the Venerable Aſſ—bly to take their caſe into conſideration, and grant them ſuch relief—from the *frog*—as ſhould to them ſeem proper ‡. But what if they had died in the interval, as in the preſent caſe?

* Would to God they had been tried! It would have been a curious, and, I will venture to ſay, an inſtructive ſpectacle, to have ſeen every orthodox brother eat his *frog*. So palpable a proof of their ſincerity—and I believe nothing leſs will do it—muſt have convinced *every* ſpectator of the juſtice of their cauſe, and effectually expoſed the groundleſs innuendos of their enemies.

‡ In this appeal there is no mention made of the ſcriptures. It is a groſs miſtake, though heretics will ſtill inſiſt upon it, that the power of the ch—h is at all founded on theſe writings. Its foundations lie in the abſtract nature of things, and in their own acts and articles.

caſe? In that event they muſt have been damned before the appeal could be diſcuſſed †: This is a clear conſequence. At all hazards, therefore, the C—m—tee ought to have obeyed and eaten—what they were ordered.

I hope, therefore, Chriſtians! that we have now ſtated ch—h power upon juſt grounds; a ſubject which has been much miſrepreſented, and been the occaſion of much needleſs altercation in all ages. But to proceed,

4thly, If they had died in any other manner than that in which they did die, they would have died *out* of the Lord, becauſe they would have died counteracting thoſe ſupreme and ruling principles which God implanted in their natures. It hath been already obſerved, that theſe principles were a love of *contention*, and an inſatiable thirſt after *hereſy-proceſſes*. Theſe were the principles which God and Nature had bound them down to follow; and they muſt have been miſerable both in this world and the next, if they had not followed them.

I would juſt obſerve farther upon this head That, even where the next world is not concerned, the talents of moſt men lie in ſome one particular direction; and it is only by employing them in that direction that a man can ever hope to make himſelf conſpicuous, or lay in a ſtock of merit. Now this too, my freinds! even abſtracting from everlaſting conſequences, was

† He follows his principles through all their conſequences, as he will ſoon have occaſion to obſerve.

the caſe of our deceaſed brethren. The only glory they could propoſe to attain in this world was in *this* way; and, if happineſs in the next depend on *merit*—which you know it does not—the exertion of their abilities in *hereſy-proceſſes* was the only chance they had for obtaining it.

Thus, Chriſtians! I have attempted the juſtification of my deceaſed brethren—which was my concealed deſign all along—by ſhewing, upon philoſophical principles‡, I. That they died in the Lord, II. That if they had not died in the manner they did, they muſt have died *out* of the Lord. In doing this I have imitated the ancient philoſophers; I have laid down my principles, and adhered to them through all their conſequences, being aſſured of this, that, if the principles themſelves are good, the conſequences cannot be evil. In ſhort, I have ſtudied *conſiſtency of reaſoning* more than *plauſibility of opinion*; and yet I hope, nay, am confident, that I have advanced nothing but what will be found ſtrictly *orthodox*.

And here, before we enter upon the next head, let us pauſe a moment, and wonder at the good fortune of our brethren, and the narrow eſcape they have made from hell. If they had expired in any other exerciſe, if they had died in any other manner than in that one preciſe

‡ A well-ordered diſcourſe ought always to have ſome concealed deſign which gradually diſcovers itſelf as the diſcourſe proceeds; until at laſt the author, having ſufficiently prepared the hearers, all at once avows it—to their inexpreſſible ſatisfaction. Our author has very happily employed this rule of art here.

preciſe manner in which they did die, they muſt infallibly have been damned, and had their portion with unbelievers in that lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone. O the depth of the wiſdom of God! who was pleaſed to take them out of this life in that only way by which we their ſurvivors could think they had any chance for ſalvation. Good heavens! What a critical affair this was? It is aſtoniſhing, I profeſs, to look back upon it.

I muſt alſo be permitted to obſerve, that this laſt point is an additional proof of the firſt. For, if they did not die *out* of the Lord, they muſt have died *in* the Lord. There is no *medium*, as we *Proteſtants* acknowledge no *purgatory*, although we be orthodox; and thus the firſt, which is the main point, receives additional confirmation. Happy * when we can frame a diſcourſe ſo as that the ſeveral parts of it ſhall mutually ſupport one another, and the whole argument go on increaſing in light and heat to the very laſt period! But to proceed—

I am come now in the III. place,—having demonſtrated that they are in heaven,—to attempt a faint deſcription of the happineſs they are enjoying there ‡.

But here, what tongue can utter, what pen can

* Happy indeed!

‡ The joys of heaven is likewiſe a ſubject too ſeldom attempted by our preſent ſet of orators. Our author here ſketches out the proper way in which it ought to be handled.

can deſcribe the glorious ſtate into which our brethren are entered? O for the language of Raphael, or of any of the other cherubims, to paint, in ſome faint meaſure, the rapturous ecſtaſies in which they now lie intranced! Methinks I ſee them with their robes on—glittering like the pureſt ſnow—their harps in their hands, and their crowns upon their heads—ſtanding before the throne—in the middle of the *beaſts* and *elders!* And now they throw their crowns upon the ground—in token of their great humility,—and ſtrike their harps to a loftier note than ever David himſelf pitched while he remained below! O exalted ſtate! O delightful exerciſe! O admirable muſicians! —But I muſt reſtrain myſelf. We muſt lower our language to the level of frail mortality; and ſince we can give no idea of the poſitive glory into which they are entered, we ſhall mention ſome particulars *negatively*, and in as plain expreſſion as we can, that ſo you may be able to conceive ſome faint, though inadequate notions of that upper ſtate of felicity which they are now enjoying.

1*ſt*, They are now freed from thoſe earthly tabernacles, I mean, their bodies, which clogged their minds while here, and prevented them from riſing ſo high as they inclined, or as their friends often wiſhed them to do. They are no longer oppreſſed with a *heavineſs* creeping over their members, and a *contraction* upon their ſpirits, which often afflict the beſt men, and render them unaccountably dull and ſtupid.

Some

Some of the deceaſed were, as you know, diſtreſſed with very cumbrous tenements of clay, and found great difficulty—as thoſe who knew them beſt can witneſs—in performing many of the functions of life. In particular, I have often pitied my R—v—d and worthy brother Mr J—— H —— when I have ſeen him wreſtling with his unwieldy body, and drawing it after him like a draught-cart—pardon the honeſt compariſon—to this ſame C—m—tee. The other members too were much embarraſſed in this particular, while endeavouring to diſcharge their duty, and not unfrequently diſcouraged from diſcharging it altogether. For inſtance; while the C—m—tee ſat in this place, as ſome of the members lived at a great diſtance, and as it did not pleaſe the Lord to ſuſpend any of the ordinary operations of nature on account of it, but to let the winds and rains take their courſe, I have often ſeen them, after a long ride,—from D—mb—rt—n or K—ll—rn ſuppoſe,—enter this very church, my friends! ſo wet, and wearied, and overcome, that though they had recruited their ſpirits previouſly at the Half-moon, they were hardly able to ſpeak five words to the purpoſe. Hence one reaſon why this C—m—tee was ſo ill attended, and the quorum frequently ſo difficult to fill. But now they are above all their toils; they are out of the reach of wind and rain; and can perform any journey, on which their duty may ſtill require them to go,

with

with all the eaſe and expedition of young cherubims.

2*dly*, They are now free from all *tears*. It is remarkable, my Brethren! That the orthodox are very tender-hearted—eſpecially in public—where their ſorrows often flow in great abundance over the hereſies of their mother-church, and the ſins of their native country. But now there ſhall be no more crying. They ſhall dry their cheeks, and pluck up their ſpirits; they ſhall ſing and laugh for ever and for ever.

3*dly*, They are alſo got beyond the reach of all reproach. While here, there were many of them whoſe characters were blackened with vile ſtories—the one half of which were not true—and yet they were propagated through the land, and not unfrequently, it muſt be confeſſed, believed. Indeed theſe ſtories, with regard to them, generally miſſed their end: For even while in this life, it pleaſed the Lord,—in his great mercy,—to endow them with no ordinary ſhare of inſenſibility in this reſpect. Knowing what they would have to encounter while in this ſtate, he enabled them to ſteel their hearts, and harden their foreheads, making them even as braſs; ſo that no calumny, however well atteſted or currently believed, was ever able to put them out of countenance. Hence they ſtill maintained the appearance of ſaints; and, in ſpite of all the ſtories that were reported, multitudes, bleſſed be God! continued to the very end to believe that they were ſo. And now people may talk as they pleaſe. They are,

literally

literally ſpeaking, got *above* ſlander. They are paſt feeling, and cannot be in the leaſt affected by it.

4thly, They have now no need of *candle*. While they remained here, they ſat up late, and waſted their eyes with candle-light, making them dim with ſtudy, and with drawing up long libels againſt heretics. But there, it is ſaid, *they ſhall have no need of candle*, Rev. xxii. 5. You cannot conceive, my friends! how many late hours were ſpent, and candle burnt, from firſt to laſt, in concerting, meditating, and plotting concerning this very hereſy; how many obſcure cabals and conſultations were held; how many ſchemes propoſed, and opinions rejected. The drawing up the libel, in particular, and to mention no more, coſt much dark labour, and required many pounds of candle before it was in a condition to receive the laſt corrections;—and, even after it had received theſe, it was thought ſtill capable of improvement. But now they are beyond the reach of this grievance alſo—for there, it is ſaid, *they have no need of candle*. Nay, it is expreſsly aſſerted, that the light of the ſun itſelf is ſuperfluous, and might very well be ſpared.

5thly, Let us not, therefore, afflict ourſelves on account of this C—m—tee. You ſee there is no occaſion at all for lamentation. Our brethren are *happy* though *dead*. They feel no *pain*. They are not gone to hell, as we have before proved; they are in heaven—it is to be hoped—where they have ceaſed from their

toils, and yet are enjoying an eternal ſabbath. A miniſter would not, indeed, wiſh for an eternal ſabbath on *earth*. A ſabbath here ſuppoſes *preaching*. In heaven it is otherwiſe. Every place has its own cuſtoms. O that we too may in time be deemed worthy to enjoy this high felicity! For you are to know, my friends! that the ſupreme happineſs of a clergyman is an *eaſy ſabbath*,—as is evident from the ambition we diſcover to get into univerſities. It is alſo evident from the eccleſiaſtical proſecutions which we raiſe againſt thoſe of our brethren commonly thought heretics. *Their* happineſs is, truly and properly ſpeaking, the object we have in view in ſuch proſecutions. We want to give them *eaſy ſabbaths*. This is the evident effect of their being *depoſed*; and it would be uncharitable to ſuppoſe that it was not alſo *our* view in deſiring it †. I have been ſometimes accuſed of being metaphyſical, and over-refined; but the preſent argument is certainly one inſtance, at leaſt, to the contrary. To me it appears extremely plain. It may be ſaid, indeed, that the late proſecution ſeems to be an exception, as the brother againſt whom it was laid was enjoying eaſy ſabbaths *before*. We ſhall anſwer this objection

† The great merit of this diſcourſe lies in this—That it comprehends all the arguments neceſſary to be known for the defence of orthodoxy. Among others, the reaſons of ch—h proſecutions—a dark enough ſubject it muſt be confeſſed—are unfolded, not formally indeed, but in an eaſy manner, as they occur. It is pity but the author would favour us with a diſcourſe on this point in particular. It is poſſible he may.

jection in its proper place †. At preſent let us proceed with our argument.

6thly, And ſo we would, but for another objection which ſome may be diſpoſed to make. They may urge, That as there will be no *heretics* in heaven to proſecute, and as the ruling principles implanted in the minds of our deceaſed brethren lay towards proſecutions of this nature, and, conſequently, great part of their happineſs aroſe from this ſource; it would appear that, even ſuppoſing them to be in heaven, they will not be ſo completely happy *there* as we would affect to have believed. In anſwer to this, I fairly allow that this circumſtance will be a drawback, and a very conſiderable one, upon their happineſs. But then I would hope it will be made up in ſome other way. Either the principles of their nature will receive a change when in heaven, and come inſenſibly to be diverted towards other objects; or, poſſibly, the Supreme Being, out of the love he bears towards them, may fall upon a way by which theſe principles may be gratified even *there*. For inſtance, he may allow them—which is the next thing to *reality*—to hold *mock* courts, to conſtitute *mock* c—m—tees, to call *fictitious* heretics before them—to reaſon

† Another art in ordering a diſcourſe is, the diſpoſing every thing in its proper place. Thus objections muſt not be always anſwered as they occur. They muſt ſometimes, as here, be *reſerved*, that they interrupt not the diſcourſe too much, by the length of reaſoning which might be neceſſary to obviate them. In ſhort, our author, in this diſcourſe, exhibits a complete model of good compoſition.

—to cabal—to intrigue with the elders—to draw up libels—to debate upon relevancies—to cenſure—ſuſpend—even *depoſe*—and, in ſhort, to go through the whole forms of eccleſiaſtical proceſs in *fiction*. This will amuſe them wonderfully. Imagination arives not, it muſt be owned, at the full effect of reality, but it often comes extremely near it. The court being thus conſtituted, and the moderator choſen—they may go through all their former exerciſes—they may abſtract from the circumſtances of time and place—they may go on to finiſh Mr F—g—ſ—n's affair in the upper houſe—they may cite witneſſes, and lead a proof—they may put it to the vote—they may be *pro*, or *con*, or *non liquet*—they may fancy themſelves ſitting all the while in the L—gh K—k. If the witneſſes ſhould not appear when ſummoned—as there is ſome reaſon to think they will not—they may continue to impute it to the unreaſonable interdicts laid upon them by the pr—ſb—ries of Ed—b—gh and Ir—ne. In conconſequence of this, they may complain, take inſtruments—if they can find a notary in heaven to receive them—refer to the ſynod--appoint—adjourn—diſſolve—oblige J—n A—d—m to give his oath—and, in ſhort, raiſe ſuch a buſtle as may keep the whole celeſtial region in an uproar. Will not this be excellent? In fine, and to ſay all in one word, they may enjoy happineſs even in *heaven*, by imagining themſelves ſtill upon *earth*.

Thus,

Thus, Chriſtians! have I attempted to give ſome faint deſcription of the happineſs which our brethren of the C—m—tee are now enjoying. O that *their* lot may alſo in time be *ours!* That *we* too may be completely freed from thoſe earthly tabernacles which weigh us down, and prevent us from inquiring into the works of God, and ways of nature, ſo accurately as we otherwiſe would! That our tears may be dried away, and our apprehenſions removed! That we may be delivered from the reproach of the wicked, and the tongues of men! And, finally, That we may have *no need of candle!*

But I come now to the IV. thing propoſed—which was, to narrate *our* loſs, and the loſs which the ch—h of Sc—tl—d has ſuſtained by their death. And—

1*ſt*, In general, our loſs is great. O Chriſtians! who can expreſs it? It is as yet recent, and, conſequently, not ſo much felt as it will be twenty years hence. There lie the bulwarks of orthodoxy, and the props and pillars of the ch—h of Sc—tl—d ‡! There lie the redoubled champions of free grace, and the great guardians of effectual calling! There lie the models of holy zeal, and the terror of heretics! There lie the learned defenders of our eccleſiaſtical conſtitution, and the expounders of the ſhorter catechiſm! In ſhort, the hopes of the church, the conſolation

‡ This ſeems to be the *pathos* which the author was to arrive at. And, indeed, ſome of the audience were almoſt crying at this paſſage, notwithſtanding the *frigidity* with which it was pronounced.

conſolation of the faithful, and the ſhining lights of the S-lt-m-rk-t, and indeed of the whole c-ty, lie all there, blended and compounded together in one great and dreadful ruin! Who *now* ſhall ſtand in the breach, and erect a banner, and oppoſe himſelf to that deluge of hereſy, impiety, and falſe philoſophy, which, with boundleſs fury, is raging without, and juſt ready to break in upon us? But to be more particular—

2*dly*, Who *now* ſhall go through, and ſolicit votes, and cabal with the elders, before ſ-n-ds, when fundamental points are to be agitated? Theſe men are perpetually canvaſſing, calculating, ſecretly exhorting, preparing ſpeeches, and ripening cauſes, for church-judicatories. By this means our eccleſiaſtical conſtitution was preſerved firm upon its good, old baſis; the ſprings of ch—ch policy were oiled; we were all kept in motion; and the true ſpirit of religion was maintained alive in its proper heat and fervour. Great zeal, uncommon activity were requiſite for theſe purpoſes; and in theſe points our deceaſed brethren were, it muſt be allowed, perfectly indefatigable.

3*dly*, Where ſhall we find men ſo knowing in acts of aſſ—bly, who underſtand the true ſpirit of our Confeſſion better, or who believe the tenets therein contained ſo *well* as they did? All the old precedents, all the different ſenſes of religious articles, all the later deciſions of ſynods and aſſ—blies—which were in the leaſt favourable

favourable to orthodoxy—with theſe they were perfectly well acquainted; and inſiſted upon them, both *in ſeaſon* and *out of ſeaſon*, with becoming earneſtneſs.

4*thly*, Where ſhall we find men who were leſs tinctured with heathen learning, or human ſcience—the great bane of all true orthodox religion—than they were? Not that they were ignorant of theſe things—they had ſeen them in their youth. But they no ſooner ſaw, than they deſpiſed them. They no ſooner commenced divines, and goſpel-miniſters, than they endeavoured to forget them; and—what is more—their endeavours ſucceeded. Thus, diveſted of all carnal prejudices, and their minds purified from heathen doctrine, their whole attention was turned upon goſpel-truths, and church proceſſes. There they were eminent! There they ſhone, the hot and burning lights of our Zion!

5*thly*, To mention no more—Their death will be an irreparable loſs to freedom of religious inquiry. Some may think this a ſtrange poſition, as, it muſt be confeſſed, they endeavoured through their whole lives to diſcourage it. Strange as it may ſeem, however, it is nevertheleſs true, and may be eaſily accounted for. For, thoſe who are acquainted with human nature know, that there is a principle of *contradiction* implanted in it, by which it deſires what is forbidden, and, the more it is diſcouraged in any purſuit, it becomes the more keen

and

and ardent. It is highly injurious, therefore, to us of the orthodox perſuaſion, to ſay or ſuppoſe that we diſcourage religious inquiry. On the contrary, we are the great promoters of it. But for the bars which we lay upon it, and the obſtacles which we are continually throwing in its way, it would decay from want of exerciſe, and die of pure liſtleſſneſs. This reaſoning is perfectly juſt, and ſtrictly philoſophical. We no ſooner depoſe *one* miniſter for hereſy, than we inſpire *ten* with an inclination to be depoſed in the ſame manner. Now, therefore, that theſe men are removed, the land will ſink into quiet, the church will be in peace; and, in this dead calm of things, religious inquiry muſt unavoidably fall aſleep, and perhaps never more awaken.

V. And in the laſt place—I ſhould now conclude, by making a ſhort encomium upon each of my dead brethren. But this I ſhall take ſome other opportunity of doing. I have many reaſons to decline it at preſent; none of the leaſt of which is, that I am afraid it would affect you too much †. I am glad to ſee that you have been hitherto able to maſter your emotions, and keep them under a decent reſtraint *, ſo

† There was another reaſon too—it would have rendered the diſcourſe too long. We are aſſured, however, that he has theſe encomiums compoſed, and lying by him. It were to be wiſhed that he could be prevailed upon to give them to the public.—I do not deſpair of obtaining his conſent to annex them to the next edition of this ſermon.

* It was really wonderful!

ſo that no tokens of extreme ſorrow have as yet been viſible. I ſhall avoid awakening your grief, and breaking in upon that comely compoſure you have hitherto maintained *. Beſides, this part of the ſubject is, in a great meaſure, anticipated. Their elogium is already made. All has been ſaid for them that can be ſaid. At preſent I ſhall only add, that tho' dead, they will ſtill ſpeak for themſelves. Their voices will yet ſound in your ears, and their memories remain upon your minds, for ſome time, as if they were ſtill among the living, and as if this fatal accident, which has made us all ſo diſconſolate, had never happened. I am going to relate a wonder, which will aſtoniſh you all. Next Lord's day, go to the churches where you uſually ſit, and where they were wont to preach, and you will ſtill think that you hear them, and imagine that you actually ſee them, in their reſpective pulpits, labouring for your ſalvation, and as zealous in the cauſe of truth as ever. I will even propheſy §, that their labours will be as ſucceſsful. I will venture to predict, that they will be

I thought

* Our author is an enemy to that ſpecies of eloquence which tends to move the paſſions—as may be here obſerved.

§ It is well known, that not a few of the good old miniſters were endowed with the gift of *prophecy*, and foretold many ſtrange events, which actually happened as they predicted. This gift is very rare in our days—even, it muſt be confeſſed, among the orthodox. It is not, however, wholly vaniſhed. There are ſtill ſome who poſſeſs it in no inconſiderable degree—among whom our author.

thought as uſeful after they are *dead*, as they ever were at any time while they were *alive*. My brethren! I am foretelling a miracle which will happen, and which you will ſee with your eyes. They will not be miſſed in ſociety yet theſe many years*. No body will go into mourning for them. What is nearly as wonderful, though not altogether ſo—they will ſtill continue to receive their ſtipends as uſual. They will even venture to ſhew their heads in ch—h c—rts ſometimes—though this more rarely;—nor will the pr—ſb—r—s where they will ſeem to reſide be in haſte appointing them ſucceſſors†. I am bound to tell you, however, that this will be all *deluſion*. They are really as dead as ever they will be—as I hope I have this day convinced you. Any good which they may ſeem to do will be merely *apparent*. Even their ſermons, and manner of delivering them, if narrowly attended to, will be diſcovered to be *hollow* and *ſpiritleſs*—and, in ſome places too, not ſtrictly *orthodox* ‡, which is a ſure mark that the men are dead. Their whole ſpeech and behaviour, in ſhort, will be ſuch as may be expected from *ſhadows*. In particular, I think

* He muſt mean their bodily appearance.

† All this came exactly to paſs as was foretold.

‡ A queſtion may be ſtarted, Whether, in caſe hereſy could be fixed upon them, they could come under the uſual *notices* of the church in their preſent ſtate? My opinion is, that they *might*: For we are commanded to try the *ſpirits*—mark the force of that expreſſion—whether they be of God.

I think it my duty to forewarn any who may think themſelves *converted* by them to take good heed—for it will be all *imaginary*, and come out to be ſuch in the event‡. But in public life their loſs will be moſt palpable. For as all their brethren are aſſured, from what has happened on this occaſion, that they are really dead, they will be ſhy ever after to truſt them with the management of any affairs of conſequence. They will never more be conſtituted into a *C—m—tee*—at leaſt not without ſome *living* brethren appointed to ſit along with them. If you inquire into the reaſons of providence in this ſtrange affair, I think they are very obvious. It hath pleaſed God, my brethren! on this occaſion, to let our ſorrow come on gradually; and not to overwhelm us at once both with their *death* and *diſappearance*. This would have been too ſevere for *us*, their ſurviving friends, to ſupport. They will ſeem, therefore, for ſome time, ſtill to walk about, and to perform their uſual functions. You will all be tempted to think,—notwithſtanding the pains I have taken in this diſcourſe—that this appearance is real; their very wives and children will be in danger of being deceived by it; and

‡ It was right in our author, however, to put people on their guard againſt them, eſpecially in the inſtance of *converſion*. For how can the *dead* convert the *living?* It would, I think, be a very proper teſt of all *converſions*, to examine whether the orator, by whoſe means it was effected, was *dead* or *alive* at the time the event happened.

their brethren, tho' they know them to be certainly dead, yet, to humour the miracle, will allow every body to remain in this belief that pleaſes, and even ſeem as if they believed it themſelves. You may conſider it too as a piece of *ſingular* honour which providence has conferred on the deceaſed. For, can there be a piece of greater reſpect paid to dead men, than to behave to them as if they were ſtill *living?*

To conclude, then—What more needs be ſaid, or can be ſaid, upon this melancholy ſubject? The brethren are dead. Let us, therefore, who ſurvive, endeavour, each in his ſphere, to ſupply their loſs in ſociety, and to do that good in the church which they *intended.* I need not ſpend much time in exhorting you to this. You are all ſenſible what great occaſion there will be for your ſtrongeſt efforts in the cauſe of truth, now that theſe her champions are no more. I would addreſs myſelf more particularly to the *elders.* It is incumbent on you, my brethren! above all others, to be watchful. The burden is now, in a great meaſure, laid on your ſhoulders. I would recommend it to you to keep the example of Ja——s M'C—nn—l in your eye *. I am ſurpriſed that that worthy man, who has done ſuch ſignal ſervice to this Church, is not yet made an *elder.* I wonder what the ſeſſion and miniſter of B—th are doing, or what their reaſon can be for overlooking

* Commonly called the *Drummer of B—th.*

ing ſuch merit. But be not *ye* diſcouraged on that account. Go on in your well-choſen path. Keep a ſtrict look-out upon *hereſy*; and, as ſoon as you diſcover any ſeeds of it, come *ſecretly*, and give *me* notice of it. May God bleſs his word. Amen.

F I N I S.

P. S. I cannot help taking notice here once more of our author's prediction concerning the dead brethren. It is as remarkable, and was as literally fulfilled, as any event which was ever predicted. The brethren are actually ſeen ſtill walking about, and performing their uſual functions, ſeemingly as if nothing had happened. They appear in their reſpective pulpits at the ſtated times. When they are there they deliver ſermons—at leaſt ſomething nearly reſembling them. They hold ſeſſions, appoint diets of examination, and viſit the ſick; and all this as gravely as if they were in perfect health themſelves. The time when they uſed to receive their ſtipends is not, indeed, yet arrived; but it is not doubted, when it does arrive, that they will go to the proper perſons and aſk it. Nor is it at all unlikely, in the preſent ſituation of things, that, for ſome years, they may even continue to receive it. You will alſo, as our author foretold, actually meet with many people who, from theſe circumſtances, and led away by appearances, abſolutely think them ſtill living. Whether their wives and children be of this number, I cannot take upon me to ſay; though I ſhould think not—their wives at leaſt—as they have *nearer* acceſs to know them. In like manner, none of their kirks has to this hour been declared vacant, though there is certainly a vacuity at preſent, and a very great one, alas! in every one of them. The only circumſtance wherein our author's prediction ſeems to have hitherto failed, is where he ſays—"Their ſermons will be ſometimes not ſtrictly ortho-"dox." I have heard none of them as yet charged with this failing.

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